(a) whether it is a fact that private sector licences of basic telephone service have not been able to fulfil their committed performance obligations in respect of provisions of Village Public Telephones (VPTs);

(b) the names of these companies;

(c) whether Government propose to impose stringent penalty on these companies for not adhering to the norms laid down by the telecom department;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) whether MTNL have also failed to provide basic telephone services in the remotest villages and if so, what is the percentage of coverage of basic telephone services provided by MTNL?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) M/s Tata Teleservices in Andhra Pradesh, M/s Reliance Telecom in Gujarat, M/s HFCL Infotel in Punjab, M/s Hughes Telecom (India) Ltd. in Maharashtra, M/s Bharti Telenet in Madhya Pradesh and M/s Shyam Telelink in Rajasthan, have not been able to fulfil their voluntarily committed performance obligation for provision of Village Public Telephones.

(c) Government has recovered Liquidated Damage charges as per provisions of Licence Agreement for delay in performance by these defaulting companies. Further, Government proposes to proceed as per the provisions contained in their Licence Agreement.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

(e) No, Sir. MTNL is licensed to operate only in the territories of Delhi and Mumbai for Basic Telephone Service.

Slow pace of providing VPT

4539. SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the pace of implementation of providing Village Public Telephones (VPTs) is very slow;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the organizations which are involved in the implementation of VPTs;

(d) what is the obligation of BSNL in implementing VPT and what are its achievements; and

(e) the reasons for disparities between private operators and BSNL installations and what is responsibility of DoT and BSNL towards implementing VPTs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) The pace of implementation of providing Village Public Telephones (VPTs) has now picked up. Earlier the delays were due to:

(i) Non-availability of supplies of material in time.

(ii) Delay in identification of villages and exact location of the same.

(iii) Contribution by private sector is very slow.

(iv) Identification of VPT custodian sometimes take time.

(c) Names of the organizations who are involved in the implementation of VPTs is given in the Statement (*See* below).

(d) BSNL is required to provide VPTs in total 546887 villages of the country by the end of year 2002. So far 468016 nos. of VPTs have been provided by BSNL in the country as on 31.3.2002.

(e) Provisioning of VPTs by private operators has not picked up. As a licensor, DoT is responsible to get it implemented through all the operators and there are various options available under license conditions, including cancellation of license. So far as BSNL is concerned, they are going ahead with the implementation of VPTs as stated above.

Statement

Names of the Organisations involved in implementation of VPTs

1. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited
2. M/s Tata Teleservices
3. M/s Reliance Telecom
4. M/s HFCL Infotel Ltd.
5. M/s Hughes Telecom (India) Limited
6. M/s Bharati Telenet
7. M/s Shyam Telelink

WLL facility in Mainpuri

†4540. SHRI R.N. ARYA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to refer to the answer to Starred Question 325 and Unstarred Question 1203 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 14th August, 2001 and the 29th November, 2001 respectively, and state:

(a) the district-wise details of the 70,000 wireless local loop phones to be provided to villages and whether such phones would be provided in Mainpuri district;

(b) whether the Kargil martyrs' village Shahjahanpur has since been provided with such phones; if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (c) The requisite information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

VPTs in MP and Chhattisgarh

†4541. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Village Public Telephones installed during last three years, State-wise;

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.